

# **ARIZONA TRAILS 2005**

## **STATE MOTORIZED AND NONMOTORIZED TRAILS PLAN**



**Janet Napolitano**  
Governor of Arizona

## **Arizona State Parks Board**

**John Upton Hays**  
Chairman  
Yarnell

**Elizabeth J. Stewart**  
Tempe

**William C. Porter**  
Kingman

**Bill Cordasco**  
Flagstaff

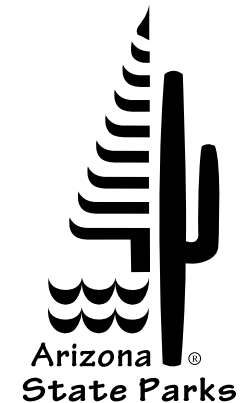
**Janice Chilton**  
Payson

**Gabriel Gonzales-Beechum**  
Florence

**Mark Winkleman**  
State Land Commissioner  
Phoenix

---

**Kenneth E. Travous**  
Executive Director



Arizona State Parks  
1300 W. Washington  
Phoenix, AZ 85007  
Tel & TTY: (602) 542-4174

[www.azstateparks.com](http://www.azstateparks.com)

# **Arizona Trails 2005**

## **Statewide Motorized and Nonmotorized Trails Plan**



**November 2004**

## Acknowledgements

The *Arizona Trails 2005: State Motorized and Nonmotorized Trails Plan* is comprised of the State Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Plan and the State Nonmotorized Trails Plan. The Planning and Recreational Trails Section, Resources Management Division of Arizona State Parks prepared this planning document and facilitated the statewide public involvement used to develop the priorities and recommendations included in this Plan.

### Arizona State Parks

Annie McVay, State Trails Coordinator  
(Principal Author)

Tanna Thornburg, Chief of Planning and Recreational Trails  
(Supporting Author, plan design and layout)

Robert Baldwin, Recreational Trails Grants Coordinator  
(Supporting Author)

Special acknowledgements are due to Robert Baldwin, Recreational Trails Grant Coordinator, Audra Beyer, Research Project Manager, Amy Hartle, Facilitator/Administrative Assistant, Annie McVay, State Trails Coordinator, Tanna Thornburg, Chief of Planning, and Vivian Strang, Advisory Committee Coordinator, for their help in the planning process. Cover design is by Iris Krondorff, Research and Marketing Project Manager.

**Arizona State University**, Department of Recreation Management and Tourism and Survey Research Laboratory, conducted the surveys and prepared the technical report for this plan.

Dave D. White, Ph.D., Project Director/Principal Investigator

Carlton Yoshioka, Ph.D., Co-Principal Investigator

Amy C. Racki, Research Assistant

### Arizona Outdoor Recreation Coordinating Commission (AORCC)

Jeffrey Bell, Apache Junction Parks and Recreation Dept. (Vice Chair)

Steve Bills, Yuma County Parks and Recreation Department

Pamela Foti, Coconino County, General Public Member

Richard Samp, Mohave County, General Public Member (Chair)

Bill Scalzo, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department

Duane Shroufe, Arizona Game and Fish Department

Ken Travous, Arizona State Parks

### Arizona State Committee on Trails (ASCOT)

Don Applegate, Bureau of Land Management

Bonnie Bariola, Pinal County Planning Department

Roger Blakeley, City of Yuma Parks and Recreation Department

Catherine Bradley, National Park Service (Chair)

Maureen DeCindis, Maricopa Association of Governments

Elizabeth J. Field, Camelback Saddle Club

Tom Fitzgerald, City of Phoenix Library, Parks and Recreation Dept.

Terri Gay, Pima Trails Association

Reba Wells Grandrud, Oregon-California Trail Association

Daniel Gruber, Citizen-at-Large, Maricopa County

Jan Hancock, Arizona Trail Association

Jennifer Lawrence-Harris, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Dept.

Robert Miles, Arizona Game and Fish Department

Sonia Overholser, International Mountain Bicycling Association

Douglas Potts, Tucson Audubon Society

Frederick Pfeifer, APS Hiking Club

Mary Pratt, Arizona Highways

Lynn Reddell, Yavapai County Trails Committee

Linda Slay, Arizona State Horseman's Association

Mike Snodgrass, Volunteers for Outdoor Arizona

Jack Steele, Mohave County Health Department

Kent Taylor, Citizen-at-Large, Pinal County

Crystal Thompson, Valley Forward

John Vuolo, Citizen-at-Large, Navajo County

Bonnie Winslow, Citizen-at-Large, Graham County

### Off-Highway Vehicle Advisory Group (OHVAG)

Harold "Drew" John, Graham County, Gila Valley ATV Riders Club

Harry Kilb, Mohave County, Lake Havasu – 4-Wheelers

Sandra L. McCullen, Maricopa County, AZ Assoc. of 4-Wheel Drive Clubs

Steven E. Morehouse, Yavapai County, Casual OHV Recreationist/Public

Michael L. Sipes, Navajo County, Citizen-at-Large (Vice Chair)

Chuck Smallhouse, Pinal County, American Motorcyclist Assoc. (Chair)

Shannon T. Wilson, Maricopa County, Riding Arizona

Photographs provided by Arizona State Parks, Arizona Trail Riders and Riding Arizona.

Additional thanks to everyone who participated in the public surveys and workshops, and reviewed and commented on the plan.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES .....	VI
LIST OF FIGURES .....	VI
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b> .....	VII
<b>CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION</b> .....	1
PURPOSE.....	3
DEFINITIONS .....	3
ARIZONA’S TRAIL USERS .....	4
BENEFITS OF TRAILS.....	5
ARIZONA’S TRAIL PARTNERS.....	10
CURRENT TRENDS AFFECTING TRAILS RECREATION .....	12
<b>CHAPTER 2: PLANNING PROCESS</b> .....	15
SURVEYS .....	17
FOCUS GROUP WORKSHOPS .....	18
PUBLIC COMMENT.....	18
<b>CHAPTER 3: PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED BY THE PUBLIC</b> .....	21
SURVEY PRIORITIES .....	23
SATISFACTION WITH TRAILS .....	23
PUBLIC ACCESS TO TRAILS .....	23
TRAIL USAGE AND ACTIVITIES .....	25
ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS .....	26
SOCIAL CONCERNS .....	30
TRAIL MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING PRIORITIES.....	33
TRAIL SUPPORT FACILITIES .....	37
TRAIL ISSUES .....	41
FOCUS GROUP PRIORITIES.....	44

<b>CHAPTER 4: RECOMMENDATIONS</b> .....	51
PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS .....	53
MOTORIZED TRAIL USE RECOMMENDATIONS.....	56
NONMOTORIZED TRAIL USE RECOMMENDATIONS.....	58
OTHER PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BOTH MOTORIZED AND NONMOTORIZED TRAIL USE .....	61
<b>CHAPTER 5: ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND TRENDS OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS</b> .....	63
ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE PROGRAM.....	65
ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF NONMOTORIZED TRAIL PROGRAM.....	69
TREND ANALYSIS OF THE ARIZONA TRAILS 2000 PLAN AND THE ARIZONA TRAILS 2005 PLAN.....	71
<b>APPENDICES</b> .....	77
REFERENCES .....	78
APPENDIX A: SUMMARY OF ARIZONA TRAILS 2005 SURVEYS ....	79
APPENDIX B: REGIONAL FOCUS GROUP WORKSHOP PRIORITIES..	90
APPENDIX C: ARIZONA STATE TRAILS SYSTEM SUMMARY .....	92
APPENDIX D: OHV RECREATION FUND SUMMARY .....	93
APPENDIX E: ESTABLISHING LEGISLATION AND AMENDMENTS ...	94
APPENDIX F: ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE OF OHV RECREATION TO ARIZONA.....	102

## LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 1: ARIZONA OHV RECREATION FUND AND MOTORIZED RTP FUND COMPETITIVE GRANT AWARDS FYs 1993-2003 .....	10
TABLE 2: ARIZONA OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE RECREATION FUND PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS FYs 2001-2003 .....	11
TABLE 3: ARIZONA TRAILS HERITAGE FUND COMPETITIVE GRANTS AWARDED FYs 1994-2003 .....	11
TABLE 4: NONMOTORIZED RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM TRAIL MAINTENANCE PARTNERS FY 2001-2004 .....	11
TABLE 5: PERCENT OF POPULATION THAT PARTICIPATES IN TRAIL ACTIVITIES.....	14
TABLE 6: OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH TRAILS .....	23
TABLE 7: PERCEPTIONS OF TREND IN PUBLIC ACCESS TO TRAILS .....	24
TABLE 8: SATISFACTION WITH PUBLIC ACCESS TO TRAILS IN AZ REGIONS .....	24
TABLE 9: MOTORIZED ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS .....	25
TABLE 10: NONMOTORIZED ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS .....	26
TABLE 11: MOTORIZED USER ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS ON TRAILS .....	27
TABLE 12: NONMOTORIZED USER ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS ON TRAILS .....	28
TABLE 13: MOTORIZED USERS SOCIAL CONCERNS ON TRAILS .....	30
TABLE 14: NONMOTORIZED USERS SOCIAL CONCERNS ON TRAILS .....	31
TABLE 15: MOTORIZED USERS IMPORTANCE AND SATISFACTION WITH TRAIL MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES .....	33
TABLE 16: NONMOTORIZED USERS IMPORTANCE AND SATISFACTION WITH TRAIL MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES .....	35
TABLE 17: MOTORIZED USERS IMPORTANCE AND SATISFACTION OF TRAIL SUPPORT FACILITIES.....	37
TABLE 18: NONMOTORIZED USERS IMPORTANCE AND SATISFACTION OF TRAIL SUPPORT FACILITIES.....	39
TABLE 19: MOTORIZED USERS IMPORTANCE OF TRAIL ISSUES .....	42
TABLE 20: NONMOTORIZED USERS IMPORTANCE OF TRAIL ISSUES .....	43
TABLE 21: OHV RECREATION FUND AND RTP MOTORIZED PORTION GRANT PROJECT SUMMARY FYs 1999-2003.....	66
TABLE 22: NONMOTORIZED RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM TRAIL MAINTENANCE PARTNERS FYs 2002-2003 .....	70
TABLE 23: TRAILS HERITAGE FUND GRANT PROJECT SUMMARY FYs1999-2003 .....	71
TABLE 24: PREFERENCE OF TRAIL DESIGNATION .....	72
TABLE 25: MOST IMPORTANT TRAIL MANAGEMENT NEEDS .....	72
TABLE 26: LOCATION FOR TRAIL ACTIVITY DONE THE MOST.....	73
TABLE 27: LOCATION FOR TRAIL ACTIVITY ENJOYED THE MOST .....	73
TABLE 28: MOST IMPORTANT SUPPORT FACILITIES.....	74

TABLE 29: COMPARISON OF MOTORIZED PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ARIZONA TRAILS 2005 PLAN AND ARIZONA TRAILS 2000 PLAN.....	75
TABLE 30: COMPARISON OF NONMOTORIZED PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ARIZONA TRAILS 2005 PLAN AND ARIZONA TRAILS 2000 PLAN.....	75
TABLE 31: COMPARISON OF OTHER PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BOTH MOTORIZED AND NONMOTORIZED TRAIL USE FOR ARIZONA TRAILS 2005 PLAN AND ARIZONA TRAILS 2000 PLAN .....	76

## LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1: OVERALL USE TYPE BY COUNTY .....	6
FIGURE 2: CORE USE TYPE BY COUNTY .....	7
FIGURE 3: PERCENT OF DIRECT OHV EXPENDITURES—\$3.1 BILLION .....	9
FIGURE 4: TOTAL OHV RECREATION FUND PERCENT DISTRIBUTION FYs 1999-2003 .....	12
FIGURE 5: ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS ON TRAILS .....	29
FIGURE 6: SOCIAL CONCERNS ON TRAILS .....	32
FIGURE 7: IMPORTANCE AND SATISFACTION OF TRAIL MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES FOR MOTORIZED USERS.....	34
FIGURE 8: IMPORTANCE AND SATISFACTION OF TRAIL MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES FOR NONMOTORIZED USERS .....	36
FIGURE 9: IMPORTANCE AND SATISFACTION OF TRAIL SUPPORT FACILITIES FOR MOTORIZED USERS .....	38
FIGURE 10: IMPORTANCE AND SATISFACTION OF TRAIL SUPPORT FACILITIES FOR NONMOTORIZED USERS .....	40
FIGURE 11: IMPORTANCE OF TRAIL ISSUES FOR MOTORIZED AND NONMOTORIZED USERS.....	41

## Executive Summary

The purpose of this plan is to provide information and recommendations to guide Arizona State Parks and other agencies in Arizona in their management of motorized and nonmotorized trail resources, and specifically to guide the distribution and expenditure of the Arizona Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Recreation Fund (A.R.S. § 28-1176), trails component of the Arizona Heritage Fund (A.R.S. § 41-503) and the Federal Recreational Trails Program (23 U.S.C. 206).

This plan includes both motorized and nonmotorized trail information, public involvement results and recommendations for future actions regarding trails in Arizona. This plan was prepared by Arizona State Parks as required by state legislation (State Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Plan, A.R.S. § 41-511.04 and State Trails Plan § 41-511.22). The 2004 publication of the two plans referenced above has been incorporated into this single document titled *Arizona Trails 2005: State Motorized and Nonmotorized Trails Plan*, which supercedes the *ARIZONA TRAILS 2000 PLAN*.

When the word “trail” is used in this plan, it refers to recreational trails and/or roads used by motorized and nonmotorized trail users.

Specific objectives of the *Arizona Trails 2005: State Motorized and Nonmotorized Trails Plan* include:

- Assess the needs and opinions of Arizona’s residents as they relate to trail recreation opportunities and management;

- Establish priorities for expenditures from the Arizona OHV Recreation Fund, Arizona Heritage Fund trails component and Federal Recreational Trails Program;
- Develop strategic directions to guide activities for the Arizona State Parks’ OHV and Trails Programs; and
- Recommend actions that enhance motorized and nonmotorized trail opportunities to all agencies and the private sector who provide trail resources in Arizona.

Arizona State Parks implemented an extensive research and public involvement process to determine the final priority recommendations of the plan. A statewide survey of over 5,000 residents was conducted from January to September 2003. The statewide survey had two components, first Arizona residents were contacted via telephone for a short survey and those that agreed were given a longer mail survey. In addition to the statewide surveys, Arizona State Parks facilitated 15 public workshops in order to gain further information from trail users, land managers, recreation and natural resource managers and interested residents.

This plan is written primarily for recreation planners and land managers. The plan also includes information regarding trail users and trends affecting trails in Arizona. The plan first presents background information on trails in Arizona. Next the planning process is described along with findings of the surveys and workshops, and then the recommendations are outlined. The plan also includes accomplishments of the OHV and Trails Programs over the past five years and appendices of relevant information. This information is intended to be a resource to guide trail agencies for the next five years—2005 through 2009.

Findings include:

- Approximately two-thirds of Arizona residents (66.4%) are trail users and one-third (33.6%) are nonusers.
- 62.7% of respondents participated in nonmotorized trail use at some point during their time in Arizona and 56.5% said most of their trail use involved nonmotorized activities.
- 24.5% of respondents participated in motorized trail use at some point during their time in Arizona and 7.0% said most of their trail use involved motorized activities.
- The most important motives for using trails for both nonmotorized and motorized trail users were *to view scenic beauty, to be close to nature, and to get away from the usual demands of life*.
- The most popular nonmotorized activities on Arizona's trails are *trail hiking (day hiking), walking, visiting historical archaeological sites, and jogging/running*.
- The most popular motorized activities on Arizona's trails are *four-wheel driving, driving to sightsee or wildlife viewing/birding, all-terrain vehicle (ATV) riding and motorized trail biking/dirt biking*.
- Nonmotorized trail users most often recreate just outside a city or town or in a city or town, but said they prefer to use trails in a remote area or a rural area. Motorized trail users most often recreate in rural and remote settings and most prefer those settings.
- Nonmotorized users travel an average of 23 miles and motorized trail users travel an average of 51 miles for the activity they do most often.
- The majority of trail users (62% to 70%) prefer trails of moderate difficulty, though more motorized users (17%) prefer challenging trails than do nonmotorized users (5%).
- Public access to trail opportunities is a concern of Arizona's trail users, especially motorized trail users. Nearly half (48%) of motorized users feel that public access to trails for their preferred activities has declined in the last five years.
- Both nonmotorized and motorized users feel that environmental concerns, such as *litter, trash dumping, erosion of trails, damage to historical or archaeological sites* are slight to moderate problems.
- Social issues that are considered slight to moderate problems by nonmotorized and motorized trail users include *residential/commercial development, unregulated OHV use, and lack of trail ethics by other users*.
- Trail support facilities that were important to both nonmotorized and motorized users included *trash cans, trail signs, restrooms and drinking water*.
- Both motorized and nonmotorized users said the top management priorities were to *keep areas clean of litter/trash, maintain existing trails, repair damage to trails, and enforce existing rules and regulations*.
- When asked to rate the top three trail issues in Arizona, nonmotorized users said *lack of funding for trails, urban development limiting access, and inadequate trail maintenance*. Motorized users replied *closure of trails, urban development limiting access, and lack of funding for trails*.



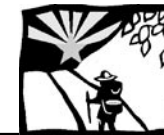


## PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

*Developed from the Arizona Trails 2005 public involvement process*

### MOTORIZED TRAIL USE

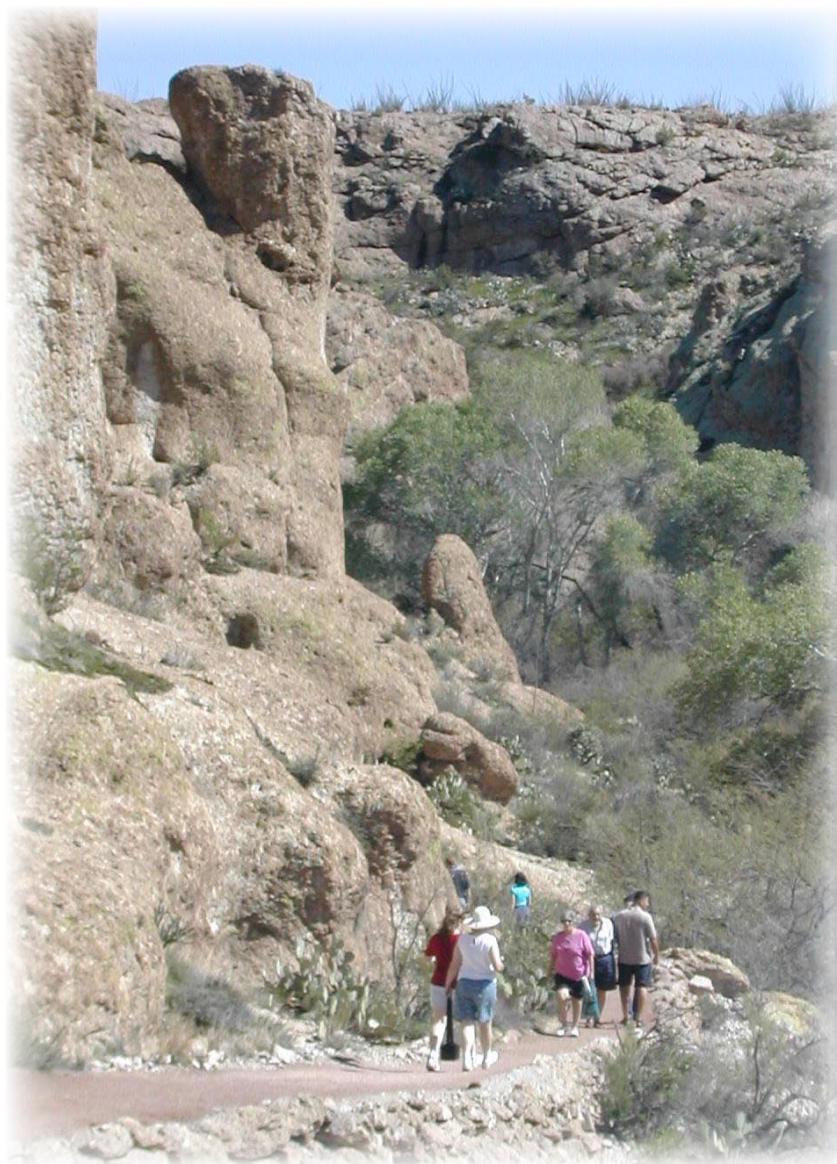
<b>First Level Priority Motorized Recommendations</b>
Develop New Trails and Motorized Recreation Opportunities
Protect Access to Trails/Keep Trails Open
Renovation and Maintenance of Existing Trails
Education and Trail Etiquette
<b>Second Level Priority Motorized Recommendations</b>
Enforcement of Existing Rules and Regulations/Monitoring
Trail Information and Maps
Comprehensive Planning



### NONMOTORIZED TRAIL USE

<b>First Level Priority Nonmotorized Recommendations</b>
Renovation and Maintenance of Existing Trails
Protect Access to Trails/Acquire Land for Public Access
Develop Signage and Support Facilities
<b>Second Level Priority Nonmotorized Recommendations</b>
Comprehensive Planning
Trail Information/Maps
Education and Trail Etiquette

<b>Other Priority Recommendations</b>
Reduce Cultural and Environmental Resource Impacts (both motorized and nonmotorized)
Seek Additional Funding Sources (both motorized and nonmotorized)
Interagency Coordination (both motorized and nonmotorized)
Develop Signage and Support Facilities (motorized)
Develop New Trails (nonmotorized)
Coordinated Volunteerism (nonmotorized)
More Accessible Trails for Individuals with Physical Disabilities (nonmotorized)
Enforcement of Existing Rules and Regulations/Monitoring (nonmotorized)



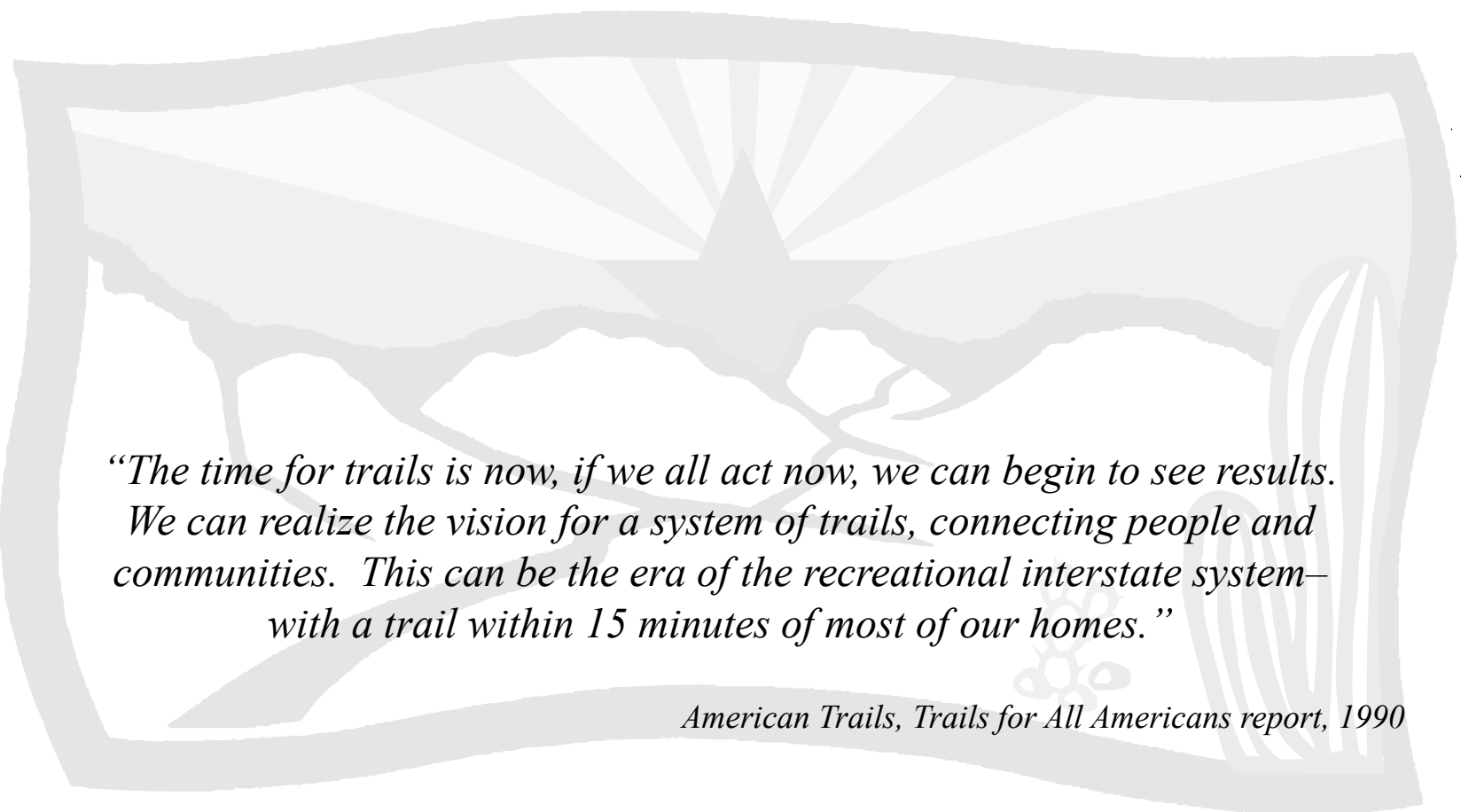
Hikers at Boyce Thompson Arboretum State Park



Four-Wheel Drive Enthusiasts on the Great Western Trail

# *Chapter 1*

## *Introduction*



*“The time for trails is now, if we all act now, we can begin to see results. We can realize the vision for a system of trails, connecting people and communities. This can be the era of the recreational interstate system—with a trail within 15 minutes of most of our homes.”*

*American Trails, Trails for All Americans report, 1990*